

Nomination for United States District Court Judges *October 27, 1993*

The President announced the nominations today of six Federal District Court judges in three States:

Harry Barnes, Western District of Arkansas
Nancy Gertner, District of Massachusetts
Reginald Lindsay, District of Massachusetts
Patti Saris, District of Massachusetts
Richard Stearns, District of Massachusetts
Allen Schwartz, Southern District of New York

"Each of these judicial nominees has had a legal career distinguished by high levels of achievement and the respect of their colleagues," said the President. "I expect great things from each of them on the Federal bench."

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1994 *October 27, 1993*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2519, the "Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1994." This Act provides funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and several smaller agencies.

Funding for the Department of Commerce is \$3.6 billion. This funding demonstrates the importance of our efforts to promote this Nation's economic growth through high-priority investment programs in the Department of Commerce. It will help Commerce to build a stronger, more competitive private sector, able to maintain U.S. leadership in critical world markets. In particular, I am pleased that the Congress has provided increased funding for the Advanced Technology Program, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program, and the new "Information Highway" program. The additional funding for these programs is a critical element of my strategy to create high-wage jobs, strengthen America's technological leadership, and increase our long-run productivity and standard of living. In addition, I am pleased that the Congress provided funds for defense conversion to address the economic dislocation resulting from the end of the Cold War.

The Act also provides funding for a number of high-priority investment initiatives within the Department of Justice. For example, funds are

provided for hiring new police officers. This investment will assist in putting new police officers on the streets of America in an effort to take back our neighborhoods from crime and drugs.

In addition, I am pleased that this Act provides significant additional resources to implement my Immigration Initiative, transmitted to the Congress on August 31. These funds will support efforts to provide a fair and effective immigration policy.

Finally, I am pleased the Congress has appropriated funds necessary to support many of our efforts to strengthen our security by promoting democracy abroad, such as through the National Endowment for Democracy. I am deeply concerned, however, about the reductions that were made to my request for payments to international organizations and peacekeeping activities. My Administration is committed to working with the Congress to enable the United States to meet our treaty obligations. Also, I take note of the language in the Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of Conference regarding congressional notification, where practicable, 15 days in advance of a U.S. vote in the U.N. Security Council to establish any new or expanded peacekeeping operation. I understand the importance of timely consultation with the Congress, but note that the notification suggested by the Congress may not always be

practicable.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 27, 1993.

NOTE: H.R. 2519, approved October 27, was assigned Public Law No. 103–121. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 28.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters *October 28, 1993*

California Fires and the Economy

The President. Good morning. Along with all Americans, my heart goes out to the people across southern California who have lost their homes, their possessions, and who have witnessed private property and the natural environment devastated by these terrible fires. More than 400 homes have already been consumed. And evacuations are now occurring, involving thousands of our fellow citizens.

This morning, I want to announce several specific actions that I am taking to respond to this tragedy in California. First, I have designated Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and Ventura Counties as major disaster areas. This makes them available for customary Federal assistance to individuals and to State and local governments.

Second, I spoke last night with our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, and he is proceeding to California this morning, along with the Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, who met with Mr. McLarty this morning.

Third, I have spoken with Governor Pete Wilson and will be consulting soon with Senators Feinstein and Boxer, to receive their recommendations on how we can be more helpful to the State.

Finally, I have instructed the Chief of Staff, Mr. McLarty, to coordinate the full delivery of all appropriate Federal resources and assistance to California. We've already dispatched 20 Forest Service air tankers there and many additional Federal firefighters to the scene. I have asked Secretary Babbitt and Secretary Espy to coordinate with James Lee Witt so that we can have a full Federal response to the problems in California.

Many hundreds of people on the ground are engaged in valiant efforts to fight these fires now. Neighbors are helping neighbors. We will

offer what we can to help fight the fires, to meet the needs of the victims, to stand with the people who are already doing so much.

Now, before I answer questions, I'd like to say just another word on another subject. For the past 9 months, the primary focus of this administration has been on improving the economy in ways that average Americans can actually tell were affecting their lives in a positive way. We've taken some very serious actions to reduce the deficit, to help increase the fairness of the Tax Code, to provide incentives to invest in important areas of our national economy, to try to give working families with modest incomes and children at home a better break.

Now, we're beginning to see real results, higher growth rates, lower deficits, things that over the long run will represent real progress for the American people. When our administration took office, the deficit for this year was projected to be well in excess of \$300 billion. The Treasury Department and the Office of Management and Budget have confirmed today that in the end, it turned out to be substantially lower. We finished this year with a deficit of \$255 billion, over \$50 billion below where it was projected to be. After years of bad policies and bad estimates, when lower deficits actually went far higher, it's pleasing to me to see that a deficit came in lower than it was projected because of efforts directed to lower interest rates which had significant direct and indirect benefits to this economy.

Lower deficits and lower interest rates have sparked the beginning of a significant economic recovery. Today, we are seeing a third quarter economic growth rate reported of 2.8 percent. I might say that it would have been substantially higher but for the floods in the Middle West and the drought in the Southeast.

Although we know our economy is still not